

9-1-1972

The Trinity Review, Fall 1972

Trinity College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/review>

Recommended Citation

Trinity College, "The Trinity Review, Fall 1972" (1972). *Trinity Review*. Book 63.
<http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/review/63>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Trinity's Journals and Serial Publications at Trinity College Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Trinity Review by an authorized administrator of Trinity College Digital Repository.

V. 27:1
TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY
RECEIVED
DEC 11 1972
HARTFORD, CONN.



TRINITY REVIEW

CONTENTS

Fall 1972

As the Crow Flies	1	Richard Woodward
The Swimmers	8	Elizabeth Egloff
Axis	8	Gigi Bradford
The Maori	9	Richard Vane
Photographs	10	Charlene Chiang
Witch	10	Jay Allison
Frontier Life	11	Chase Twichell
Junction in Poetry	12	Chase Twichell
Are You a Vegetarian?	14	Michael Gross
On Platform 23	26	Hugh Ogden
One Bad Winter Morning	27	Megan O'Neill
Untitled	27	Pierce Gardner
Memory	28	Carlos Martinez
Spring Thaw	30	Gigi Bradford
Batfasio's Belief	31	Philip Demke
Intermission	32	Virginia Butera

Clockworks, including cover
Richard Siegesmund

AS THE CROW FLIES

She knocked at the door. She put her head forward, closer. Nothing.

Edwin?

She stood up straight, stood closer. She knocked again. Her bones struck the wood quickly, in short direct bursts upon the face.

Edwin? You in there?

She grabbed at the handle and shook it. Her hands were graceful. She wore no nail polish. The bones were long and the joints were visible. The door rattled and the paint from the hinges feathered into strips. She pulled on the handle again forcing it up and down. The paint splintered and fell to the floor.

Edwin!

The knob and the metal rod slipped out of the door. She jerked back, fell back against the wall. She let the odd piece of metal slip from her hand, drop to the floor. It bounced on the wood.

Oh for petesake.

She marched back into the kitchen.

No, he doesn't answer. He's shut himself in again. Can I have him call you back?... I'll tell him, yes. Fine. Yes. Yes. Goodbye.

He leaned back against the wall and put the pencil between his teeth. It was a clean yellow, wet from his lips. He pulled it back and forth touching it with his tongue. He gnawed on the eraser without thinking. The chair swung forward.

No better. Tryyyy M. 'out for a good time'. 3 wds. 9 Ltrs.

...Just for fun?...No. Has to be nine letters. If...no.

His room was L shaped, divided into study and bedroom by a partition and door. The room was part of the new addition, built on only five years ago. He had promptly decorated it with paintings, photographs of bridges, and drawings by his granddaughter. Above his desk, facing the windows together were two portraits. To the left, an early Wyndham Lewis portrait of a rather young English lady. He liked it only because he had once lost it. He was sure it had been stolen, when it turned up a year and a half later in the guest room eaves. He hadn't noticed how handsome it was until he missed it. On the right was a painting his first wife had done the first summer they had spent together after the war. It was a picture of him seated on a bench with his back against the trunk of a tree. A big cedar it looked like. He wasn't wearing a shirt. That was the summer they spent in the Canadian Rockies. Side by side, he and the Englishwoman seemed slightly ill at ease. She looked directly at the painter. Her bones were severe and she wore a sort of frightened straight smile. She was done all in yellows and browns. he was done in dark flesh tones with scratches of black for his chest hair. His back was buttressed against the tree. His hair was longer then, curly and thick but his body seemed frail, almost delicate. Like Lesley Howard you look like, someone told him. His shoulders were hunched forward as if the bark were cutting into his back. Still he managed a smile. Side by side they seemed to be embarrassed for each other, not for themselves. He seemed to watch her and smile at her.

Z. 'recidevist; floater'. 8 Ltrs...No. That can't be.

Through the windows the sun turned on and off as it went from cloud to cloud, turning the portraits white, washing them out in the light, and then darkness and the detail of the faces. And then the sun again slants warm light from mid-afternoon and the desk is hot and he is tired and the portraits are white. He put down the magazine. What did he want to hear? Certainly not Wagner and not Puccini. Mozart? The box stood in the sun. The covers were warm but inside the record was still cool. He pressed it to his cheek. No. He slipped the jacket back on. No. He didn't want to hear anything, really. He walked into the bedroom. The doorknob rolled on its side under his night table turning as he walked past to the door. He undid the chain and he snapped back the lock. There was no handle. He pounded on the door.

Helen! Helen! For christsakes open the door!

He saw his half of the handle under the table. He moaned a round sigh as he stooped to collect it. The bar, the long grooved metal piece was missing.

Heelleen! Heleeeen! Helen!

She couldn't hear him. The mirror jumped on the wall. The night table shuddered. He looked at himself in the mirror, pulled at his sideburns, swept his hair back. He looked past himself to the wall, over his shoulder to the wall and then back to his face. In the mirror, in back of him he saw the closet door. He straightened up at how smart he was. Yes yes. Yes. He unscrewed the closet doorknob, inserted it in the door. He smiled to himself as the handle caught and turned. Yes? Yes! The door sprung open. Helen stood at the top of the stairs. There were sprinklings of white paint in the doorway. She presented him with her half of the door handle.

Edwin B. Tucker. People have been trying to reach you all day.

Jay just called and Katherine's on the phone now. You come out of there this instant. He stepped over the paint ashes and they proceeded down the stairs.

She's in early, alone, out here by herself and would someone please come pick her up at the Airport. Oh you know how to find it, don't give me that look. Take the expressway. Yes. Now you understand.

She kissed him on the cheek. He put the handle on the counter. It turned.

Now I have a meeting in fifteen minutes.

She checked her watch.

Oh my, ten minutes. And I have to bathe and dress, so could you please rescue her for me? Oh Edwin, don't be impossible. I'll tell her you're on your way. She'll be out front.

He dawdled over a glass of water. She spoke into the phone. He poured the water slowly, in a steady stream from his glass. She cupped her hand over the phone.

Oh go on. You'll find it.

The seats in the VW. were worn slick from too many bottoms and they had lost their firmness, their spring. He sat down with a bump. The steering wheel was cold and he could see his breath blowing white against the windshield. The car moved backwards into the street. It stalled twice. Two cars were behind him. Finally with foot to the floor it drove off in a cloud of exhaust.

Take the expressway. E. 'desire or liking for something; taste'

7 Ltrs. Third Ltr. a.

It began to rain, the gray drops collecting on the windshield and then blown over the edge. She was inside the front door looking out through the glass onto the street. It began to rain harder. He tried his horn but the water had seeped through the plastic to the wire. It made a gurgling noise. She didn't see him. He double parked and raced in. The street was smooth with rain. She waved. He pulled open the door. She reached for her bag but her hands were small and fine, not quite closing around the handle. She had been a pianist at one time. Quite a good one. He took her bag and kissed her awkwardly. He had never known her well. She was Helen's friend and Bob, her husband, was his. Katherine was a good fifteen years younger than Bob. Helen liked her. Katherine was young and pretty.

Well then. What brings you out to fair Oregon so early? Where's Bob?
 They ran back to the car. Their coats smelled wet.
 I have friends down in San Francisco. I thought I might see the West.
 She wore a pantsuit with a camel hair coat. The rain and the run to the car had messed the bun in her hair.
 Bob? He's in the hospital. No nothing serious. They're still running tests. He's having problems with a kidney.
 She punctuated her sentence by slamming the door and then reslamming it. They talked for a while longer and then broke off into a mutual silence, the car buzzing along. Edwin smoked a cigarette. His eyes following the white line of the road. They were on the expressway.
 How's the farm? You don't miss New York at all?
 No. It's quiet. It's o.k. really.
 I mean did everything work out? The goats and horses and everything? Everything grow that was supposed to?
 She laughed. Yes everything was fine. The hay was in. They pulled in. He wanted to offer her his umbrella but she ran ahead into the house. She set her things on the counter. He followed.
 We have a farm now you know, or did Helen write and tell you? Oh your room is top of the stairs and then left, end of the hall.
 She headed toward the stairs with her voice drifting away.
 Yes. She wrote me all about it. Ed, excuse me, where's the bathroom?
 He walked to the stairs. She was looking over the bannister.
 Would it be all right if I took a bath? I'm awfully grimy and we don't have anything but a shower on the farm. When did you say Helen would be back?
 She was peeling off her wet stockings. Ed smiled. He looked up at her. He paused for a second.
 She said around five but her word isn't always reliable. But listen, go right ahead and wash up but if you want a bath I'm afraid you'll have to come downstairs. My bathroom doesn't have a bath, you see, and Helen's does. So its up to you. Towels are down here anyway if you want. Helen won't mind. No. I can make you a drink.
 What's your fancy?
 But she had disappeared into her room. She threw open the window. The air was thick with rain. She took out a bathrobe.
 Oh I'm sorry Ed. Whiskey and soda will be fine. Yes. I'll be down in a while.
 She had been to this house only once before when Dave was alive. Dave was Helen's first husband. She liked Edwin but he was different from Dave. Shorter than Dave. Helen was late and so was dinner: lasagna, fresh green beans, ice cream, and wine. Helen sat down her glass. Edwin filled it from the decanter. He was smoking a cigarette. Helen sipped her wine.
 So tell me Katherine, what have you been doing with Bob in the hospital and all? Are you still writing?
 Katherine emptied her glass and Edwin filled it and then his own. She brushed the hair away from her eyes. She swirled the wine around in her glass almost spilling it.
 No. There's no time. With Bob sick mostly I just fix what needs fixing. I'm pretty busy. Bob wants to buy a piano so I can play again but..I don't know. I'm pretty busy.
 Helen had high cheek bones and her face was stretched tightly around them. She reached across the table to take a cigarette from Edwin's pocket. He took her hand and shook it gently. Her eyes lit up.
 Edwin Tucker. You stop this. Give me a cigarette!
 He shook her hand gently, smiling at her.
 Oh you're impossible!
 Katherine looked up from her wine.
 Why? What's the matter?
 Oh he thinks he's a comedian that's all. Whenever I want a cigarette. I don't have pockets you see, and so when I want a cigarette I just reach over and take one out of

his pocket, but he has to be clever and so he shakes my hand. He shook her hand gently, smiling. Edwin gave her a cigarette. Katherine laughed. He uncrossed his legs and his foot slipped against her. He apologised.

When my granddaughter was here I told her there was a pickpocket in the house and this look of amazement crossed her face. 'Oh really, who is it?' And I whispered to her 'Your Grandmother'. She looked at me, 'Really?' I told her 'Yes, she steals my cigarettes'. Helen wouldn't speak to me all night after that.

He and Katherine laughed. Helen poured herself another glass of wine.

Yes. Very funny.

They had after-dinner sherry. They went outside to the picnic bench. Edwin wiped off the chairs with a towel.

What about your work Ed?

He poured her more sherry.

Designed any new bridges lately? Or are you helping Helen with her campaign? He ran his thumb around the edge of the glass. He smoked.

No. I only go into work two days a week now. There's not much to do anyway. Except give advice that nobody wants to hear. Consult. Helen says she doesn't need my help. There are people working for her who take care of most of those things. I watch.

And provide commentary?

He smiled.

Yes. And provide expert commentary.

Helen broke in.

I told you didn't I about the student who's running against me? A draft resister, was in jail for a month, he claims he will win with the student vote. If the Republicans run a strong candidate this time, he just might, with a split vote and everything. I've asked him to withdraw but he says no, He Will Run and He Will Win. That type I don't know.

Katherine watched her. Edwin poured himself another glass of wine.

O.K. Mr. Tucker, you've had quite enough food and drink for one evening.

He touched his stomach. It was quite padded. Helen laughed.

And the clincher of course is that the students don't care if I win, or so says this draft resister. His argument is that if the conservatives do win, and do clamp down, hard, well then that will 'dialectically' cause the people to overthrow the government. The revolution. They simply do not understand. It's all such nonsense.

Katherine agreed.

And after you spoke out against the war and everything.

Helen took a cigarette from Edwin.

I still stand a good chance as an incumbent. It'll be tougher this time that's all. Edwin added.

She hates to lose.

Helen exhaled her smoke upwards. She and Edwin looked at each other. Katherine watched them. Helen put down her glass.

Well, whatever, what's tomorrow? Saturday? How about a trip to the mountains, out of the city into the mountain air? I'll finish my work about noon and then we can have a picnic lunch at Castle Rock. It will be marvelous. Don't you think? Katherine rine? Ed?

They agreed it would be marvelous. They finished their drinks.

Dave...

Katherine looked up.

and I used to picnic up there when we were first married. And Ed knows all about the land up around there, the mountains. It will be fun.

Katherine found it eerie to hear David's name. Ed didn't seem to hear with the water running. He was scraping off the plates. Helen took five of his cigarettes and said goodnight. Katherine climbed the stairs to her room. She called down goodnight from the top of the stairs.

Goodnight Katherine.

Goodnight.

Edwin stayed downstairs to read. He sat down to watch the news, the book in his lap. Something about the Democratic convention; someone stealing someone else's delegates, the war; fighting in the DMZ, weather; clearing and colder, sports. Katherine appeared in the doorway. She was in her nightgown. Her shoulders were bare. She pulled up her strap.

I couldn't sleep. Must be the time change.

She rubbed her eyes. The light hurt her eyes. He turned off the set. She plunked herself down in the chair across from him. He looked at her over his reading glasses.

Helen's in bed?

He lit a cigarette.

Yes. Why, something wrong?

She examined her hands. She picked at one of her blisters. The palms were smooth. She ran one across the other. She touched her hair back. Her hands were small. No not really. Couldn't sleep that's all.

He laid his book on the floor. He crossed his legs. He watched her until she looked up. Helen wrote me that you two were separating again.

He blinked and uncurled a puff of cigarette.

It's just until the campaign is over. You know how she gets during a campaign. No I guess you don't. It's not serious. We both agreed to it. It's a mutual separation. She watched him. He took off his glasses. There was only one light in the living room. Edwin sat under it. She was in the shadow.

Bob really is sick, isn't he? I mean you two haven't...

Oh no. Things are pretty tight, that's all. The farm is in kind of a mess. That's all. She was cold. She rubbed her shoulders.

Aren't you cold? Here, I'll get you Helen's housecoat.

Oh, don't bother.

No. No. Here I'll get it.

They both stood up. Edwin opened the closet door and pulled off the houserobe. The hanger sprang back and jangled. He held it for her. She walked back to her chair. She settled down in the chair.

Bob is pretty sick I think. The doctors are fuzzy on what's wrong. He's lost about twenty pounds already. I don't know. He's so thin.

She leaned back. With her finger she was wrapping a curl of hair around her finger. She looked at it and let go.

Ed. He hasn't worked in a month. Did you know that?

He didn't.

The farm is just going to pieces I'm afraid, and I try to fix things, I tried to fix the well pump and almost electrocuted myself. I don't know anything about chickens.

She laughed. Ed waited for her to start crying. The tears after the laughter, but she didn't. She looked at her hands, smooth.

If Bob has to stay in the hospital after these tests, I don't know, where is the money going to come from for all this, goats and horses, and he wants cattle next he says.

Ed. Where are we going to find the money? I didn't want to spend the money for the trip but he said it would do me good to get off the farm for a while. I don't know Ed.

He walked over to comfort her. He had never known her well. She was Helen's friend. He felt clumsy, distorted. Should he give her a friendly kiss on the forehead? His arms hung dead from the shoulder. She stood up. His arm fell from her shoulder and thudded the arm of the chair. She looked at the floor. She smiled. Ed would not look.

She smiled.

I'm all right. I need some sleep. I know you were just trying to help.

She smiled at the floor. She looked down at him. He sat in the chair. The robe was at his feet. Her shoulders were sharp and small. She reached for her strap, put her finger between the cloth and her skin. She smiled at the floor. He rubbed his finger across his lip. Her knees were bare.

Goodnight Ed.
Goodnight.

She trotted crisply up the stairs. He stood at the window for a while, then turned out the light. She threw her head out the window. The air was heavy with rain. She breathed it in. The street below shone black under the lamps. The rain was drying up. The lawns were wet and the cars were wet and the people were wet and the streets were slick with rain. His daughter was in California now. Now she was probably asleep. The water hissed when the tires sped through it in places. She closed her eyes. She turned away from the window. The windows were gray, the room dark. He could see out onto the street. She slid into bed. The sheets were cold and she curled up to knead her toes. She heard Ed's shoes on the wood as he climbed the stairs. He closed his door.

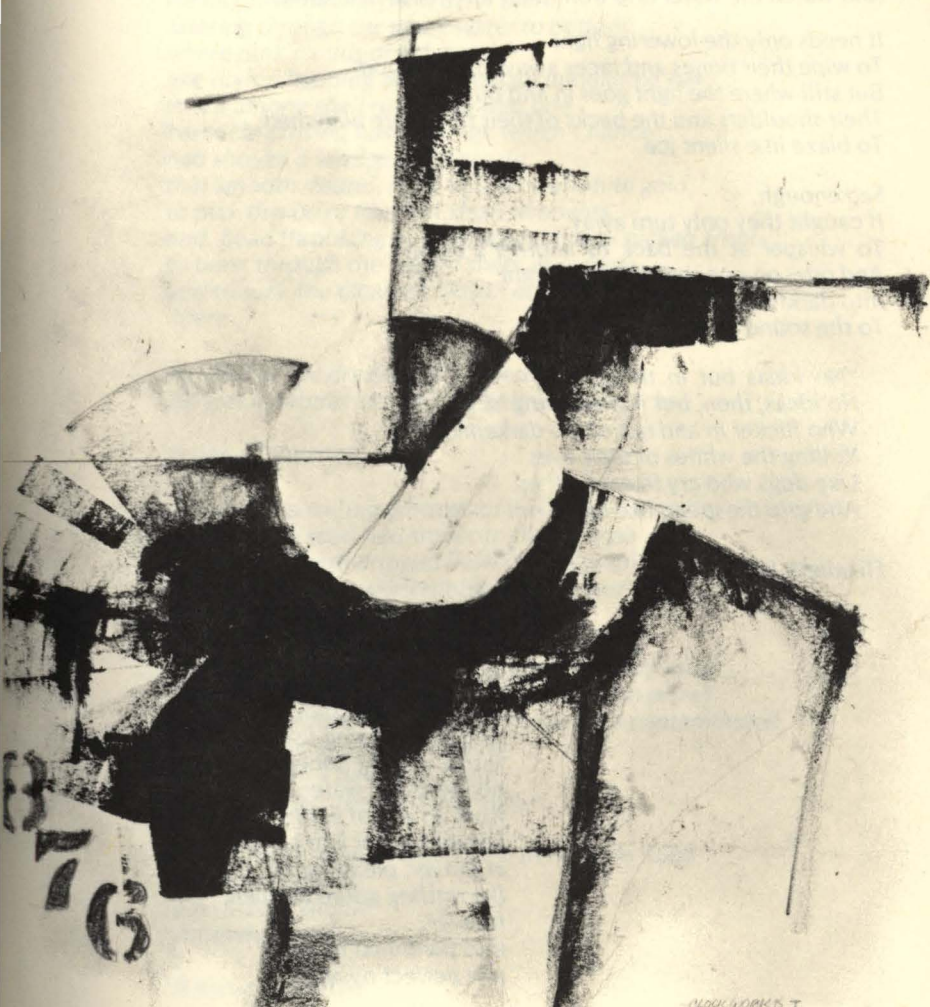
Please don't give up. Don't give up on me now. I'm not old yet.
You're so thin. You're too thin.

The hike in the mountains was a success. Katherine said that she enjoyed walking by the ocean. The mountains sometimes made her dizzy though. She had never been in the Oregon mountains. She liked to walk. Their farm was only two hours from the Atlantic, a hundred miles as the crow flies. She would see the Pacific when she went to San Francisco. They packed lunch: sandwiches and a bottle of wine. They took the three-mile hike.

Don't you wait for us old folks. Katherine, no no. You head right up the trail. We'll catch up. Don't worry about us. You go ahead.

She reached the top long before they did. The earth was firm packed from the rain. It had rained in the mountains too. There was an old lookout tower built among the rocks. It had been abandoned with the new budget cuts. They voted on everything in Oregon. She could see the rivers cutting through the trees below her. The tower was stripped from the weather. She ran her hand along the iron supports. The rust came off on her fingers. Up near the top it was still wet. She wanted to climb but she felt dizzy, in the mountains. She wrapped her hand around the pipe railing. The ladder was wooden and there was a step missing further up. One foot and then another. She was climbing. She looked down. She felt dizzy. The mountains went on forever. The wood had rotted. The plants and the fir trees smelled cold. The sun was not out yet. The step snapped. She clawed at the railing, at the stairs. She was falling. She slid down one notch to the next step, the tips of her small feet balancing on the edge. She stopped falling. She watched her feet as they reversed themselves down the ladder. She was sitting on rock, on a rock. Her head was weak. Her bones shook. She could see them traversing below her. Her hands were pulled up into her sleeves. She had two cups of wine. They had to catch their breath. You go ahead. She couldn't understand them. Why did they marry? She didn't understand. She wasn't falling. When Edwin pointed out Cougar Dam and the Three Sisters she couldn't pay attention. His finger would point and her eyes would try to follow but each time her eyes would fall off to the left or right. The stone underneath her was sharp and robbing her of warmth. The lookout tower rose above her. Her eyes watched where he pointed but each time she dropped off and followed the rivers or the birds winding away. She felt cold. She wore only a sweater. She wrapped her arms around herself for warmth. The stone was hard against her. Edwin pointed to the mountains, to the great distances, to the wild country. She felt cold. Her eyes were full with the distance. Edwin wore his big green Army coat. She wanted to go down. The lookout seemed to bend backwards toward them. Helen was laughing at one of Edwin's jokes. He was filling her cup full of red wine. A sweater was not warm enough. She wanted to go down. Her arms were tightly wound around her. The sun would not be out for another hour. She followed the line of mountains. Edwin smiled at her. She wanted to go down.

Richard Woodward



THE SWIMMERS

Seeing them

[Where the young boys always swim in such afternoons]
Standing knee-deep like restless herons
In the cold, black waters of some northern lake;
Observe the breathless heave of their bony chests
And watch the water drip from their foreheads like jewels.

It needs only the lowering light
To wipe their bones and faces away to childhood
But still where the light goes in and out
Their shoulders and the backs of their thighs are blanched
To blaze like silent ice.

Sad enough,
If caught they only turn away
To whisper at the back of another's neck—
And one, on one they fall from sight
Into darkly secret leaves
To the sound of raining in trees.

"No ideas but in things—"
No ideas, then, but in swimming boys
Who flicker in and out of the darkening hill
Rolling the whites of their eyes
Like dogs who cry to each other
And grip the green like life.

Elizabeth Egloff

AXIS

Trees flap open on the hill.
A pond grows cold.
And the wagging fish
shrink in their bones
below round water
from an eye of earth.
Leaves simper like hags
at prayer, pleading for
the rattling gourd to open,
forever,
into perennial bloom
of a perfect oyster.

To ripe and ripe without the rot
To find the instant of evergreen orgasm
To kneel suspended in a mote of sound

Bones of trees, bones of prayer
chatter soundless in the marrow
of the rotting gourd.
Mark in what continual, monotonous motion
they move.

Gigi Bradford

FROM SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE POEMS:
THE MAORI

There the wind brought the scent of coconut.
There he boy, simple,
depend on body.
He might've been a pearl diver there,
filtering through the azure water to bottom
where pink clouds of fish pass
like divine flapping birds across an undulating sun;
to sift among shell rubble for that one
barnacle-crust ed husk through which Chance
had shoved a sand grain to create
that smooth, round, ivory accident of white gold;
to pick this prize from the dead remnants
and, head throbbing as the pocket of air is picked empty,
to burst through the craven sheet of surface
and to suck the clean air like an ecstatic babe
There.

He died of the dry heaves in Dresden.
He was a natural for the job, 'bein' a pearl picker.'

It was all inverted

Dry dives to rotting grottoes of the dead;
to perforate scorched stones to the fetid pit
where rat's teeth dripped flesh like rusty spigots;
sifting among the shell rubble for that one
uncharred human being which Chance
might've saved from man's bloody accident;
Picking the dead from the mutilated, stinking dead
[there are only ashen husks here, there is no prize]
and, head throbbing as the pocket of air is contaminated,
crawling to the pocked surface
where the air's turned to gall
and the wind reeks of rotting—

He would've been alright if he'd lived in his mind
from time to time,
but he boy, simple,
depend on body.

It was all inverted

He tore himself to pieces,
throwing up and throwing up.

Puked himself to death he did.
Amen.

Richard Vane

PHOTOGRAPHS

picture
frozen places
with people
still
born into space

with no time
left unmoved
glass eyes
stare not
seeing

familiar shapes
from a memory
distorted
by breath
suspended

there is no depth
too shallow
that the water
will not refract
an image

of a departed world
which existed
empty
where no one
returns

Charlene Chiang

WITCH

The moon is pinned
between two trees,
an altar to the night.
She kneels beneath
etched in darkness
outlined in its light.

Her arms snake upwards
weaving, reaching
through her cat-black hair.
Shadowed birds
beat wings in silence
but cannot take the air.

Her eyes rolled in
she prays alone.
The ground obeys her knees.
The moon hangs trapped
in her midnight shrine
begging for release.

Jay Allison

FRONTIER LIFE

The West
warm with adventure
entrances him

who was once a northern man.
She thinks of him
her arms full of laundry

the cold of northern August
on her face and hands.
The house is still

in the first stars' presence.
A twig on the roof
lifts in the wind but remains.

She will sleep, and wake in time
to see the stars drift off
from the frontier

their lines to the earth cut with light.
The face that takes them in
will know the loss suffered somewhere

the soundless explosion
and slow white dispersal into space.
And in the filtering light

before the sun settles the last ashes
the wind will come shaking
through the laundry on the line

and she will control
the wild-armed shirts
with clothespins.

Chase Twichell

JUNCTION IN POETRY

Language is a tool of the conscious mind. The vocabulary of a language consists of as many words as are necessary to communicate with cognizance. At the same time, language can transcend itself. That is, it can evoke more than its words mean. This is so because our minds are not entirely conscious.

In poetry, certain combinations of word sense and word sound trigger other-than-cognizant responses in us. Something happens between two or more words, phrases, or possibly even stanzas. What is there, though created by language, is beyond language.

Sometimes the leap first occurs in the poet's head: it enters his conscious mind sufficiently clearly to be detained there by associative use of language. More often, it is not until the poet looks at the words he has already written that he becomes aware of it. In both cases, the process is mysterious: it is never entirely within reach of the conscious mind. The poet who is aware of an associative leap in his experience tries to make it accessible to his readers by finding a verbal (conscious) formula that conjures it out of the language. This construction is what I call a "junction."

Consider these lines from *The Book of Nightmares* by Galway Kinnell:

"the luminous

beach dust pounded out of funeral shells,"

-X,2

Even if every word were meticulously defined, the whole meaning of the lines could not be paraphrased or explained. The meaning cannot be verbalized; it is not accessible in purely cognizant (verbal) terms. One could say the two lines had to do with life and death, with growth and decay, with the ocean, with human perception of the ocean...that would be a start.

If a poet can juxtapose elements of language so that his original wordless experience is strongly, consistently accessible to others, then he has succeeded in making a junction in poetry. The temptation is to translate or interpret the experience, and so lose it. The idea is not to verbalize it, but to find words that approximate it through their associative overlap. It is a little like relating a dream at breakfast. You begin to tell it and it vanishes.

How is it that the poet comes across these only partially conscious experiences? Are they random, or are they directly related to his conscious life? What guides him in his not entirely cognizant securing of them for others? Can he learn to have access to the parts of his mind that give birth to these leaps, or would that be madness?

Some things, anyway, are certain. Human experience is too vast and too complex to be contained in and organized by the conscious mind. What we occasionally glimpse, that is strange there evades and usually escapes us. But we do have glimpses. The source may be the Freudian subconscious or the Jungian unconscious, but it is not, at any rate, conscious.

In poetry, each word is vitally important both for its sound and for its sense. The poet's control of the junction he creates depends therefore not only on some non-cognizant instinct but on an extensive knowledge of the language as well. He must be aware of the associative properties of each word he uses.

A junction occurs in poetry when the poet uses both his conscious mind and that part of his mind that is mysterious to him. An experience that is not entirely cognizant is made accessible to others by way of language, which is. The experience is not represented by language, it is conjured by it. What is communicated with words is beyond words.

Chase Twichell



'ARE YOU A VEGETARIAN?'

There were fourteen tables outside the cafe and at the eighth one, counting from the left, there was a girl. I was sitting at table number seven, wondering, what with her legs propped up on the table one over the other like that, how nice it would be if she were wearing one of those short skirts like Marylin likes to wear. She had no shoes on, and the bottoms of her feet were quite dirty, and probably smelled like the city streets she'd been walking on. Her toes were stubby. Marylin has long toes, and sometimes gets on these nail painting kicks where she'll sit for hours painting fingernails and toenails, a different color for each hand and foot, green and yellow, black and white, red and blue, her favorite combinations. A man in a grey business suit, wearing a hat and blowing his nose with a white handkerchief, walked by us and glanced sideways at the girl. His mouth was covered by the handkerchief, as if he were protecting himself from poisonous gas. I looked back at the girl when I realized that he was trying to make eye contact with her, but she hadn't noticed him at all. There was a piece of paper in her left hand which she was reading and at the same time with her right she was picking up bits of lettuce, tomato and cheese out of the salad on the table, putting them in her mouth and chewing them slowly. Like a chipmunk in slow motion. I wondered if she was a vegetarian. She was wearing a red and white striped shirt that only came down half-way, letting her belly show. I could think of only one girl that had bigger cheeks, one I was fascinated with at this bar once, mainly because of the way she simultaneously chewed bubble gum and smoked cigarettes, in between taking sips of her mixed drink. I thought of offering table number eight here a cigarette, but figured that if she were a vegetarian, she wouldn't smoke...

In my wallet I keep an old pin-up picture of Rita Hayworth that I found in a box of trinkets in a garage sale. I also came away with a splinter from the box. Imagine what she must have meant to the shaved behind the ears buck private who hung her in his locker while they were training him to fight in World War Two. I can just see him looking at her in that sleek negligee. Silky slinky soft. God, the way she arches her back just the slightest bit, the angle of her breasts (thrust forward and up), the angle of her chin, every part of her body positioned perfectly to make her that much larger than life. She really is a buck private's dream. A pin-up girl. Wonder if Joe Buck took her overseas with him? Carried her in his pocket when he went into a French whorehouse to lose his virginity? Such a sweet, young and innocent French girl. She couldn't have been more than eighteen. How many buck privates did she initiate? How many did she think she fell in love with? He wasn't the first, though he probably dreamed he was. She was brunette, she had to be. Rita Hayworth was brunette. Once she stole into his heart, he wouldn't bat an eye at blondes. He'll always remember the way that old bed creaked.

Marylin is better looking than the lot of them. Better looking than the vegetarian,

double bubble with the big cheeks. The innocent whore (who probably had very full lips and was flat chested), and Rita baby, beautiful as she is in this old picture. Marylin is my wife. She's the most beautiful woman in the world and she can't get enough of me...

I decided I wanted this girl. I noticed that she had dropped a piece of lettuce, dripping with some kind of Italian dressing, on her lap, and that she was quite oblivious to her mistake, her eyes being fixed on the piece of paper in front of her. I fidgeted for a while trying to open a new pack of cigarettes while watching her chew her food, took one out and lit it, then spoke to her.

"Uh... excuse me, but there's a piece of lettuce on your lap," I said. She jerked her head to her left to face me, looked at me for a moment like she had heard me say something to her but didn't hear what was said, then swallowed what was in her mouth and looked down at her well faded jeans where the lettuce sat, picking it up with two fingers and placing it in the ashtray on the table, and returning to her piece of paper.

"I'm sorry," I said, "I don't mean to bother you, but are you a vegetarian?" I inhaled too deeply from my cigarette and coughed a little.

She threw the paper on the table and whirled around to me, putting a hand on each of her knees, her legs spread out to about shoulder length. They were nice legs, although I imagined they would appear a little short when she stood up. She was a little pudgy around the mid-section. Still, a short skirt like the kind Marylin wears.....

"No. I dig meat. You have a name?"

"Jeremy."

"I'm Grogg." (pronounced like garage, fast)

"Grogg?"

"Yes, and Grogg digs your meat, Jeremy," and she jumped on me, kissing me all over my face and neck. I stood up, and she remained wrapped around me, her legs twisted around my waist, her arms slung over my neck, licking my right ear until I had to laugh, and I said, "Grogg tells Jeremy where she lives, yes? Grogg tells Jeremy where she lives and Grogg and Jeremy hole up in bedroom for week and make love," and she whispered her address in my ear and then we kissed a big slobbering kiss, and I knew that for the next week I could forget that Marylin ever existed...

How tall do you think Rita Hayworth is? Five-six, five-seven, something like that? You can't really tell from the picture. Marylin is five feet nine inches tall, the perfect height for a woman. And she has brown hair (that takes on a kind of reddish tint in summertime) extending well down below her waist. Boy, one time after we had just gotten together and we were still really drunk on one another, holed up in this room I rented in a motel, Sleepy Hollow Inn, or something like that, I snapped this Polaroid of her just coming out of the shower that Joe Buck just would have gone crazy over. I don't think he could bear to hang that one up. Her hair was flowing down over her breasts, revealing just one of her perfectly shaped nipples, and down past her belly. They ought to put a jewel in that belly button. I want to tell you, Marylin has it. She's got them beat hands down. And she's all mine. I don't let anybody else touch her. Well, every once in a while I let her father kiss her, but that dirty old man...I know what he's thinking. How come her mother don't look like that? Me and her father sat in his living room last Sunday watching the football game on T.V. while Marylin and her mother made dinner in the kitchen. It was her father who first let me in on the fact that Marylin's never going to age. At fifty she's going to look the same as she did in the kitchen then at twenty-two.

The first time Marylin brought me home, her father, Leo's his name, grabbed me by the collar and brought me up to his bedroom where we talked about it. Leo's a big man. On his dresser, there's a picture of him when he was just a young socialist, standing with his wife, in front of a store which you could barely make out as Max's

Delicatessan, which he explained belonged to his wife's father. He was actually gawky looking then. There wasn't enough weight on that big frame. His arms were too long, his sleeves too short, his face, clean shaven, was thinnish. Now, his stomach just hung down like he had a few pillows stuffed under one of those grey work shirts he liked to wear, his big grey beard looked like it hadn't been washed for weeks, bits of our lunch could be seen in it, along with other lunches and dinners, there was no hair on the top of his head, but on the side he had let it grow long and scraggly, and there were bags under his eyes. A lot of them. Leo had a deep voice.

"You know what I think, boy?" he said. "I think you are one lucky cocksucker." He used his hands a good deal when he spoke. Did quite a bit of finger pointing. I just sort of smiled back at him, and reached into my pocket for a smoke. I didn't know quite what to say to him. I had the feeling if I said the wrong thing he'd beat on me. I offered him a cigarette.

"What are you smoking?" he said, reaching over and taking the pack out of my pocket with a massive hand that had hair growing all the way up the back of each finger. (There were twin beds in the room; he was on one, I on the other.) Leo seemed to have hair everywhere, except on the top of his head. "Camels, eh?" He studied the pack for a moment. "Yeah, I'll take one of them." He flipped the pack back to me, leaned over to the nighttable between the two beds, and stretching, with a groan, came up with a lighter. I noticed on the nighttable a little lamp, with a statue on its base that looked like a troubador, but with his head cut off. There was a hole in the lampshade. "Look, Jeremy," he said, "I'll be blunt. O.K? You don't deserve Marylin. No man does. Maybe I do because I made her, but even that's up to question." He leaned forward and pushed some hair away from my eyes, straightened my jacket collar a little and put his hands on my shoulders. (With those hands he could strangle me in about two seconds flat, I thought.) "Boy," he said, "What do you think about incest?"

I immediately flashed to a scene with a twelve year old girl struggling to break the grip of this hairy old man, crumbs from his beard falling all over her just forming breasts. Come on now Leo, you didn't do that, did you? Thing like that could scar a girl for life. Who knows what kind of neuroses it could cause? Leo was looking straight at me, having taken one hand off my shoulder to continue smoking the cigarette. His bloodshot brown eyes with the bags under them were staring directly into mine. You did, you bastard, you did. I don't believe it, I thought. "You didn't," I mumbled.

He threw his hands up in the air and slapped them down hard on my knees. "What's it to you, boy. So what if I did! Your whole world gonna start falling down over your ears? What are you thinking? That your property is damaged? You little cocksucker." He stood up. "If I didn't make love to that girl, its not because I don't believe in incest, its just because I never got around to it. The proper moment never arose." He chuckled, his laugh being almost like a grunt, walked over to his dresser, took the picture of him and his wife in front of Max's, and threw it at me. It landed on the bed, and I picked it up. "Look at Joanie, there. She was almost as beautiful as Marylin then, but she aged fast, just like I aged, just like you're gonna age. Hey, throw me another cigarette, would you?" I threw him the pack. "Marylin's not going to age though. She'll look the same until she dies. In thirty years you won't be driven up the wall by this mad desire for your daughter, because your wife'll be even more beautiful. That is, if she still wants you. But she probably will. Too goddam faithful for her own good. She gets it from Joanie." He laughed, again a kind of short grunt. "But you know all about this aging business, don't you. You've had the dream." I had been having this recurring dream where Marylin sat on a throne with angels flying around her, little cherubic ones, naked, with wings and pudgy smiling faces, and Marylin sat there painting her nails while I felt myself shriveling up. "The one where she sits on the throne, right?" Leo continued. "You've had that, haven't you?" He came over to me and took back the picture. "Joanie's had that dream, I've had that dream, Marylin's had that dream, off and on during the past twenty-two years neighbors, the mailman, our doctor, relatives, you name it, people have told me they've had that same dream.

Cocksucker! Excuse me while I take a piss.”
He slammed the door behind him.

I walked down the street with Grogg wrapped around me and told her a dirty joke I had heard a few days ago about a Long Island Chicken. She loved it and continued peppering me with kisses and ran her hands up and down my back and through my hair. “You have beautiful hair, Jeremy,” she told me, “thick and dark. I love dark haired men.” After a while, she began to get a little heavy. When I asked her how far her house was she said that it was only a little ways away, but if she was too much for me, she would be glad to step down and walk beside me. I said no, that nothing in the world could make me put her down until there was a bed to put her in. Her bed, in a little room with a locked door, and nothing to disturb us....

We were stopped by an intense looking young man with curly black hair and a hawkish nose, and three lines of red paint, painted vertically on his forehead. He was walking in the other direction. When I first saw him, I had no idea he wanted me to stop, but he blocked my every attempt to get around him, without saying a word, and looking at me like I had murdered his father or something, so I stopped. He clapped his hands once and shouted, “Grogg!” She shouted back, “Eliot!” released her hands from around my neck and fell backwards. He caught her hands. Then she kicked her legs up onto my shoulders, then back into the air, and wound up sitting on his shoulders. I had no idea she was that agile. She raised her hands into the air. He said, “I’m not speaking to you Grogg, how could you have betrayed me like that.” He grabbed her by the bottoms of her feet and brought her to a standing position. She said, “Eliot, stop acting like a child.” He threw her high into the air, where she did a complete somersault and twisted her body so that she came down into his arms on her side. “Bitch!” he shouted, and threw her into the air again, where she whirled herself around once and came down in the same position. He brought her face to his, she wrapped her arms around him, and they started kissing. By this time I had noticed people walking down the street had stopped and had been staring at the two of them. I reached into my shirt pocket for a cigarette. Most of the people, upon seeing Grogg and Eliot kissing, figured the show was over and continued walking. One person, however, an old lady with a large bag that seemed to have needlework in it, came up behind me and tapped me on the shoulder.

“It’s too bad Ed Sullivan went off the air, isn’t it,” she said.

“Ed Sullivan? Oh, yes, a shame.”

“Such talent. Are you dancers?”

“Dancers? No. At least I’m not a dancer. They might be dancers though. I...uh...don’t really know them, you see.”

“Yes.” She put her bag down. She had positioned herself so that I couldn’t look at her and the other two at the same time. Occasionally I would turn to check up on Grogg and Eliot. They were still kissing. “It’s things like this that make me glad I haven’t moved out of the city,” she said. She had on a white blouse and a long blue skirt with big pockets in it. She reached into one of the pockets and pulled out a package of Beech-nut chewing gum.

“Piece?”

I thought of the girl who smoked and chewed at the same time. I started to laugh as I was exhaling some smoke which made me cough. I shook my head no.

“Most of my friends, I mean my oldest friends, the friends I was friendly with when I was your age, have left, you know. They’ve moved into the suburbs to live with their children, or grandchildren. How old do you think I am?”

She looked to be about seventy. I said sixty-five and glanced back to where the other two were, panicking for a moment when I didn’t see them. They had moved from the center of the sidewalk over next to the wall of the bank. Eliot had put her down, but had her pressed against the wall. Their arms were still wrapped around one another and they looked to be still kissing, though I wasn’t sure, because they were in the shadow of the building.

"I'm seventy-eight," she said. By the way, my name is Alice Horowitz." She held out her hand.

"Jeremy Winters," I said, shaking it. Her grip was strong. She had amazing eyes, bright blue, sunk deep into her head.

"Horowitz was my last husband's name. I still use it, though I'm living with a man named Black now. I've been married three times you know, outlived all of my husbands. Arthur's sixty-nine. First man I've ever had that's been younger than me. We decided not to marry because it would mean less social security money. Stupid the way that system works, don't you think?"

A group of teenagers came charging up the street talking about some concert. One of them, a cute little blonde girl, practically knocked me over, as she passed between me and the old lady. "I don't know much about it," I said.

"If you live in this district, vote for Pringle, Malcolm Pringle. He's a young man, but he cares. He really cares about the old, and he'll try to help them. The others have no social conscience. None at all. Here, wait." She bent over and started rummaging through her bag. I looked to the wall of the bank, and Grogg and Eliot were gone. I thought I saw them walking down the street. I told Alice I had to run, but she managed to stuff a brochure into my hand before I could get away. It said:

ELECT A FIGHTER!!

MALCOLM PRINGLE FOR U.S. CONGRESS.

And there were two pictures, one of Malcolm Pringle in a business suit, and one of John L. Sullivan, the first champ, with his beautiful handlebar mustache, in boxing trunks, with his fists up.

The football game was on T.V. and the Jets were winning ten to seven at the half. Leo sat in his giant rocking chair rocking to and fro like a hairy buddha. Behind him and to the left, on the off white wall, were the Picasso etchings. He had ripped them out of a magazine and taped them to the wall with brown masking tape. There were seven Picassos on the wall and one Leo Harris, two across, four down. Joanie came running in with a tray of potato chips and onion dip, and put it down next to Leo.

"You didn't have that tray the last time I was here, did you Joanie?" I said, "It's very nice."

She was down on her knees in front of Leo picking pieces of the Sunday New York times off the floor. "You like it, Jeremy? Very nice of you to say so. I like it. Pooky doesn't, do you Pooky?"

Leo rocked forward and slapped Joanie in the ass so hard she fell flat on her stomach on top of the newspapers and almost knocked over the tray of potato chips and onion dip, saying as he slapped her, "That's where Spooky has her taste sometimes. In the ass. Come on now, Jeremy, if you don't like the serving tray, say so. We don't have none of this social grace shit in this house. I won't stand for it. We say what we think. Right spook?" He took a chip and dipped it in the dip.

Joanie wasn't saying anything. She hadn't moved from the moment she hit the floor. She was lying there, with her arms at her sides and her eyes closed. I thought she was fooling around at first, but was beginning to wonder if maybe she had hit the floor harder than I originally thought. Maybe the wind was knocked out of her. The cuckoo bird came out of the cuckoo clock behind me to announce that it was three o'clock. It took me by surprise and I jumped up in my seat a little, which broke Leo up. "Jumping Jeremy Jiminy Cricket. Jumping Jumping Jiminy," he mumbled, as he laughed. His laughing turned into quite a fit of coughing, however, as he had some potato chip caught in his throat.

"Are you alright?" I asked.

He shook his head yes and waked me off, when I asked if I could help him, but I got off the couch anyway, and walked toward him, almost tripping over Joanie's feet. In fact, she, I think, raised one of her baggy pant legs up as I walked over her, in an attempt to trip me. Marilyn, running in from the kitchen, reached her father before I did, pushed him forward in his chair and, holding one hand on his shoulder, over by

the neck, slapped him on the back with the other hand until the coughing stopped. "Alright, daddy, why's mommy lying on the floor like that?" she said.

"Because she has her taste in her ass."

"Daddy..." She had her hands on her hips and was tapping her right foot on the floor, to show her impatience. I was standing behind her, fooling around with the back of her apron string, tying and untying the bow.

"She didn't get enough sleep last night," said Leo. "I had her up all last night making love, and it wore her out. Look at her, she's taking every opportunity she can get to catch a few winks. I just gave her a little love tap is all."

Marylin just said hmm. She walked over to Joanie (I had the apron string untied when she moved away from me so it fell off her onto the floor), and squatted down in front of her. She ran her hands through Joanie's very short darkish hair, and said, "I think you better come in and check on the turkey, mom, it looks to be almost done."

"Tell your father to pick me up."

"Pick her up, Daddy."

"Hey, what do you think of that Namath," said Leo, dipping another chip in the dip and putting it into his mouth, "up all night boozing and carousing and he still can throw those touchdowns."

"I'll pick her up," I said, taking a step toward Joanie.

"No Jeremy, you stay where you are," said Marylin. "Daddy'll pick her up, won't you Daddy," and she moved over behind Leo, leaned over him, opening up the first button of his work shirt, rubbing her hands inside the shirt, and kissing him on his forehead, his right cheek and the right side of his neck.

"Your daughter's seducing me, Joanie, aren't you going to get up and pull her off? Hey Jeremy, did you ever see two women fighting? Ever watch roller derby on the tube?"

Marylin stuck her finger in the onion dip and put a dab on Leo's nose. "What do you think, Jeremy," she asked me, "do you think it would take a long while for a man with a big gray beard to get a whole bowl of onion dip out of it, supposing he has one thrown in his face?"

"Years," I said, "centuries."

"You trying to make yourself an enemy, boy?" said Leo.

"Oh really, Daddy, stop playing games. Your dinner's going to be ruined," Marylin said, and walked back into the kitchen.

"I'm going to pick her up now Jeremy, but its only because I don't want my dinner ruined. You got that?"

"Right, Leo," I said, putting my hand up on the wall next to one of the Picasso's to brace myself. He popped one last potato chip in his mouth, wiped off his nose, stroked his beard once and picked her up.

"Why thank you Pooky, that was very nice of you," said Joanie.

"Don't mention it."

"I'm so glad that Marylin didn't throw the bowl of onion dip into your beard. Its such a beautiful beard, have you had it long?"

"Years."

"Can I kiss you?"

"Kiss me."

They kissed. Leo put his hands behind her neck, and held her lips to his for a moment longer than she intended, it seemed. Then she started walking toward the kitchen, fast. Joanie always walked fast, and the keys in her pants pocket jingled loudly when she walked.

"Pooky doesn't like the serving tray, but I'm glad you do, Jeremy," she called back to me. I found myself looking at one of the Picasso's, the one in the upper left corner.

I ran down the street like a broken field runner yelling after Grogg. I caught up with them two blocks down, running up in between them and putting an arm on each of their shoulders to hold myself up. I wasn't used to that much exercise. "I...I thought



"I'd never catch you," I managed to blurt out as I tried to catch my breath.

"Here," said Eliot, "lets move him over to where he won't be knocked over by people passing down the street." They propped me up against the wall of a Beauty Salon.

"Mr. Pink's," it read, "For the distinctive look you need."

"People show no respect," said Grogg.

Eliot reached into my shirt pocket, and started taking cigarettes out one by one, breaking them in half and throwing them onto the sidewalk. "I don't like these," he said. Grogg was leaning on my shoulder and twirling around a lock of my hair in her fingers. I reached up and grabbed Eliot by the wrist after he had broken my third cigarette in half and was reaching for a fourth. I had about half a pack in my pocket and didn't want him wasting them all. He took a quick step closer to me, then raised his whole body up so that it was perfectly straight and he was standing on his toes, and with his free hand made a fist and hit himself on the chest once, then placed the free arm by his side, fist still clenched. He was my height to begin with, but now was staring down at me. His brow was knit so that the three straight vertical red lines on his forehead seemed squiggly. I noticed that he had a small gold earring in his left ear. "Let go," he said. I let him go, not wanting any trouble. He took another cigarette out of my pocket and broke it in half.

"It's best," said Grogg, who was no longer leaning on my shoulder, but continued to play with my hair.

"It's ridiculous," I said to her, brushing her hand away from my head, "Who does he think he is, anyway, ruining my cigarettes like that. If he doesn't like them, I won't smoke while he's around. He doesn't have to destroy the pack."

"He can't stand the thought of someone he loves smoking cigarettes." She had her nose pressed against the glass wall of Mr. Pink's and was staring inside. I glanced down at the sidewalk and counted seven cigarettes. I felt Eliot's hand in my pocket two more times and saw two more broken cigarettes fall to the ground. That was it. Then Eliot took the package out and threw it down. A grey schnauzer on a leash being walked by a Puerto Rican boy of about ten, with a big bandage on his left eye, came and sniffed at the cigarettes.

"How did you hurt your eye?" I asked.

"I got in a fight," said the boy. "If you think this is bad, you should see what I did to Carlos. I knifed him good."

"Are you good with a knife?" asked Eliot, stooping down to pet the schnauzer.

"I'm getting better," said the boy. "Talk to me when I'm fifteen, then I'll be good. Not going to be nobody going to get the best of me when I'm fifteen. Nobody." He continued walking the dog.

Eliot got up and looked me over for a second, then smiled, came forward, put his arms on my shoulders and kissed me once on both cheeks. "Grogg," he said. Grogg came around in front of me, wrapped her arms around my neck, got up on her toes and gave me a long, sweet kiss on the lips, then slid her hands down around my waist, tucked her head into my chest, and squeezed herself as tight as she could into me.

"Do you have a toothbrush with you?" said Eliot.

"No," I said.

"We'll have to get you a toothbrush. And some mouthwash too. What do you think, Grogg? Listerine, or Colgate 100?

"I think Colgate leaves a sweeter smell," said Grogg.

Eliot put his right arm around me, his left arm around Grogg, and we started walking down the street.

"I feel so good," said Grogg, "my two favorite men are going to love me and love one another."

Eliot was whistling something. He couldn't whistle that well, so I had trouble figuring out just what it was he was whistling. Instinctively, I reached toward my shirt pocket, but remembered.

There was a knock on the door after dinner (during which we had consumed quite a bit of wine), that came while Leo and Joanie were waltzing in the middle of the living room. Marylin and I were on the couch sharing a glass of wine and watching, she with her head on my lap, humming to the tune on the radio, which I didn't recognize, while I played with her hair. It was long enough to wrap around my neck twice and her neck once, with a small piece to spare. Joanie, who had been carrying dishes into the kitchen when this particular song came on the radio, literally screamed, "Pooky!" I expected to hear the sound of a thousand dishes crashing to the floor, but she somehow managed to get rid of them and came dashing into the living room, grabbing Leo's hand and attempting to pull him out of his rocker.

"Please, Pooky, dance this song," she said.

He had his free hand rivetted to the arm of the rocker, and her efforts were only succeeding in moving the chair forward a few inches. "Now, Spooky, I just ate. Anyway, I'm talking to Jeremy, here," he said. He had been explaining to me his theory on the direction in which American sports were moving. The Jets had won the game by a score of 45-24, as Namath had thrown for six touchdowns. It was Leo's contention that after the fans started to get bored with football, after they began to ho-hum the fact that it was only human offenses against human defenses, and people stopped coming to the games, some youngster in one of the think-tanks would come up with the brilliant idea of substituting lions for the defensive units, and we would return to the gladiator days, and Americans would eat it up because they were becoming more and more bloodthirsty every day.

"Marylin, help me get your father out of the chair. He's stuck," said Joanie.

"I don't think he wants to dance," said Marylin.

"Nonsense. He's stuck. Don't worry Pooky, we'll get you out. Oh, it's just horrible, isn't it, that these chairs aren't made wide enough for big strong handsome and virile men like yourself. I do so want to show you off in front of the children. Come, Pooky try now, ummmphhh, ummmphhh..."

Leo got up with a groan, and proved to be quite a graceful dancer for a man his size, but became annoyed with the jingling of the keys in Joanie's pocket and had taken them out and thrown them viciously against the wall, without saying anything, shortly before the knock. Joanie ran to the door. It was Bill Hubiak of the Kiwanis Club.

Joanie asked him if he waltzed. He told her he waltzed very badly and only among friends. "My closest friends, that is. The closest of the close. My wife. Only if we're alone in a cabin in the woods and I know there's no one for miles around that could be looking in the windows at us. I'm that bad. Ha ha." He patted Joanie on the head and marched toward Leo, who was still standing in the center of the room, snapping his finger to the one-two-three, one-two-three of the music. Bill had a wavy head of pure white hair and a bushy mustache, and a big smile on his face and an outstretched arm, as he approached Leo. Leo shook his hand, mumbling, "How are you, Bill?" and returned to his rocker. Bill sat himself down at the end of the couch and slapped Marylin on the leg. "And how's the most beautiful girl in the world," he said. "You know, you're the reason I came over here. I saw your car out front."

"Jeremy and I are just fine," said Marylin, burying her head in my stomach, so that her words were muffled. Bill Hubiak lived across the street from Leo.

"Look kids, I'll come to the point. Marylin isn't normal and the world should know about it. I can make her famous, a living legend. I can assure her a place in history."

There was a knock on the door. Joanie ran in from the kitchen to answer it. A young man, tall and thin and going prematurely bald, walked inside and came directly over to the couch, taking Marylin's hand, which was hanging over the side of the couch, in his, and starting to kiss it.

"You're late," said Bill.

"Traffic," said the man, who was wearing a black leather motorcycle jacket, unzipped halfway to reveal a tie-dyed tee-shirt underneath.

"Who is this guy," said Leo, drumming the fingers of his right hand against the arm of

the rocker.

"John Ames," said Bill.

"I could love this girl," said John Ames, continuing to kiss her. With a quick upward jerk of her hand, Marilyn released his grip, slapping him in the face hard enough to draw blood from the corner of his lip, and wrapped both of her arms tightly around me. John Ames felt his lip, and tasted some of his blood with his right forefinger.

"Tell her," said Bill to Ames.

"I am a sculptor. I'm being displayed presently at two galleries in the city. A major museum is negotiating the purchase of one of my works. One has a sense of these things. I can sense that I am about to break through. I can feel a masterpiece in me that will bring the art world to its knees," he said, and took out a red and white hankerchief from his pocket and held it against the corner of his mouth.

"You know the great artist series we run down at the club, Leo? I tried to sell you tickets, didn't I? Well, John, here, was one of the speakers. I showed him a picture of Marilyn that I happened to have, at the party afterward. He wants her to model for him." He was running his hand up and down Marilyn's leg. She kicked her leg upward, but not far enough to clip Bill in the face. It was more of a warning.

"Excuse me while I go upstairs for a minute," said Leo, and he knocked over the serving table as he got up out of the rocking chair. Joanie came running in from the kitchen with a rag and some cleaning solution to wipe the spilled wine and onion dip off the floor.

"Watch it, Joanie," I said, "there's broken glass."

"You are so beautiful," said John Ames to Marilyn, shoving the hankerchief into his pants pocket and placing his hands on the edge of the couch, "If I capture one fraction, the smallest fraction of what you have, the art world will fall to their knees and kiss your feet. You will be besieged."

"Really?" said Marilyn, and she rolled over in my lap to face John Ames, "You really think so?"

Leo called to me from the foot of the stairs, telling me to come up with him. We walked to his bedroom.

Grogg and Eliot positioned me at the foot of the water bed, which took up most of the space in the room. The walls were brown, and there was a fireplace to the left of the bed that was boarded up. The one window in the room was directly in front of me, and it looked out over the railroad tracks. Next to the window was a small television set, on top of a nighttable. Eliot stood just to my left with his arms folded across his chest. "I'm not blocking your view, am I?" he asked.

"Not at all."

Grogg started giggling. She put her hand over her mouth to stop herself. "You stand right here and look out the window," she said. "Try to describe the people waiting at the station to Eliot. There should be a bunch of them, cause there's a train due soon, I think," and she ran across the water bed and out the door.

"I can't see the people from here," I said to Eliot. "I can only see the top of the station. Is it alright if I move closer to the window?"

"Breathe deeply," Eliot said. "Close your eyes and think of a person you'd expect to be standing there." Eliot looked very serious. When he wasn't speaking, each muscle in his face seemed taut. The brow was knit, so that I could almost envision the teeth clenched underneath them. When I closed my eyes that's all I could picture, teeth.

The door slammed behind me and I was pushed hard onto the water bed, which almost caused me to black out, it made me so dizzy. Eliot jumped on top of me, unbuckling my belt, pulling down the zipper and my pants and underpants in one fell swoop down around my knees, and frantically worked at untying my shoes. Grogg had jumped onto my stomach and was kissing me and unbuttoning my shirt at the same time. She rubbed her hands all over my chest, while Eliot was rubbing around my thighs, and then she took a tube of red paint, which she had brought back into the room, and put some on one of her fingers and drew a big heart, the top humps of

which came up around my shoulders with the point shooting down below the naval. She drew a big arrow through it, from one side of my body to the other, slanting upwards, of course, and broken in the middle. She was inscribing our names in the heart when Eliot noticed the brochure that had fallen from my pants pocket when he had thrown them on the floor. He reached down and picked it up.

"Malcolm Pringle?" he said.

"An old lady gave it to me while you two were playing on the street." I was rapidly getting used to the way the water bed was changing its shape around me, and was beginning to feel quite relaxed. Grogg was partially blocking my view of Eliot, but I could see that he was making a paper airplane out of the brochure. "I know Malcolm Pringle from somewhere. Grogg?"

Grogg finished with my chest, leaned forward and licked my left ear a little, whispering something about the best massage I was ever going to get. "Malcolm Pringle," Eliot said, twisting his body around to face the window, and throwing the airplane out. "Have you heard the name somewhere, Grogg?"

Grogg was painting my face, lines on my forehead like Eliot's flowers on my cheeks. "Isn't he the one with the T.V. commercials that have film clips of old boxing matches? Oh Eliot..." She turned around to face him. "I think he's going to be with Dicky tonight!" She returned to the last flower, first giving me a quick kiss on the lips. "We watch Dick Cavett most every night," she said.

Leo sat me down on one of the beds, and asked me for a cigarette. I gave him one and he smoked it as he paced up and down between the two beds, over to the dresser, where he picked up the old picture of Joanie and him, to one of the two windows in the room, which he opened and spit out of once before he said anything to me.

"How long, Jeremy?" He was still looking out the window.

"How long, what, Leo?"

"How long before I see them running out together, you dumb cocksucker," he said, throwing the cigarette out the window and turning to me. "How long before they hop on his motorcycle and race off to some artist's colony in Mexico?" He walked back around the bed and sat himself down next to me, putting his arm around me, pressing me against him, practically whispering in my ear, "That's your wife he's stealing away, boy. That's your wife and my daughter. Think of what we're losing. The most beautiful woman in the world, now and always, since she's never gonna age, and she's slipping through your fingers right now. You gonna sit here and smoke your goddam Camels while he sweet-talks her into coming to Mexico with him?"

I removed his arm from my shoulder, moved over to the other bed, and took out a cigarette. "She won't leave me," I said to Leo. "Will she?"

He leaned forward and put his hands on my shoulders. "Damn straight, she will, boy. You stay up here another ten minutes and you'll never see her again. That American might not look like much, but he holds all the cards. Now Marilyn, she knows how beautiful she is. Don't you think she'll take a chance on him? Take a chance on his capturing a piece of it in his goddam statue, or whatever the hell he's going to make of her? He captures one little piece of that beauty, and the whole art world falls to its knees. What do you got to offer her compared to that?"

"Well..."

"Nothing, right?" He stood up and stared down at me, pointing at me with his right hand as he spoke. "Not a mother-fucking thing, you lucky cocksucker. I don't know how you got her in the first place. You got no guts, you know, you don't take any action." He dropped to his knees, awkwardly, with a loud groan, and put both his hands on my cheeks, shaking my head slightly back and forth. He was looking up at me now, as he spoke. "You got to do something, boy, you got to assert yourself. Let her know she's got something there. Let her know what she's missing."

"Leo, I..." My words were jarbled, the effect of his hands pressing in on my mouth from both sides.

"You know I like you, Jiminy, I really do. I don't know why, but I like you." He

slapped me playfully on the right cheek, but it still felt like a lot. "You dumb cocksucker, I want you to have her! I don't like that guy down there any more than you do, you know. That's why I'm telling you this."

I took my right foot, raised it to the level of Leo's chest, then pushed him back against the other bed with it, causing the bed to shoot back about five feet, and Leo to wind up on his back on the floor. I stood up.

"You think I should be tough, eh?"

He started to pick himself up, laughing the whole time. "Yeah, I think you should be tough."

"Take action." I fixed up my coat, which had gotten rumpled.

"Yeah, take action." He raised himself to a standing position.

"What kind of action do you suggest I take?"

Grogg and Eliot and I made love on the water bed. A train passed outside while one of us was having an orgasm.

"Well, Jiminy, the thing is, you treat her too good," Leo said, as he moved the bed back into place. "You got to be rough with her every once and a while. Put her in her place, take advantage of her, get her so mad the tears'll start forming in her eyes. I know it sounds mean, but believe me, its the only way. I found that out long ago with Joanie. You got to stir 'em up, you got to test 'em, you know, test them constantly, draw out their passions. No man in his right mind would just stand there and watch an artist steal his wife out from under his nose. When was the last time you had a good fight with that girl?" He put his arm over my shoulder.

"I don't think we've ever had a big fight."

"If you'd fought with her yesterday and made up, she would have kicked that bastard out of the house before he said two words to her."

Leo took the Webster's Seventh Collegiate Dictionary off the dresser and handed it to me, and we walked out of the bedroom. "Now be tough," he said. John Ames, Bill Hubiak, and Joanie were all sitting on the living room floor congratulating Marylin, who was sitting on the couch. John Ames was kissing Marylin's hand. I walked down the stairs behind Leo, with the book behind my back.

"Isn't it wonderful, Jeremy," said Marylin. "John Ames thinks I'll go down in history with the Mona Lisa."

I walked up behind Ames, and hit him over the head with the book. It knocked him out. "Things are going to be different now," I said to Marylin. "I'm going to show you that I'm a man to be reckoned with."

Leo slapped me on the back and laughed his short grunting laugh.

I was lying on my stomach on the water bed and Eliot was sitting on me giving me a back massage while Grogg tinkered with the television trying to get a clear picture of Malcolm Pringle on the Dick Cavett Show. Pringle was talking about going into the halls of Congress with both fists up and fighting for what he believed in, but there was a lot of static.

"Eliot," Grogg said, "why do you love Jeremy? Is it because he's so gentle?"

"I love him because he loves you, Grogg. I can't help it, its the same with every other guy that comes in here. Just to know that they love you is enough for me." He ran his hands up my neck and through my hair, bent over me and whispered in my ear, "Grogg is the most beautiful woman in the world, don't you think? She attracts men like honey attracts bees."

"Oh, Eliot, said Grogg, "you know that's not true."

"Tell her its true," he whispered, and exerted some pressure on the back of my neck with his thumbs. "Tell her."

ON PLATFORM 23

*Your hands flex in prayer, your face
woven in a quiet smile as simple*

*as rain. You wait for the train
to begin its single journey back*

*to the earth you came from, like
a mother in dry patience, a perpetual*

*thin whiteness in the flesh you
carry. You have learned everything.*

*Whatever you do your eyes disguise
nothing, holding the terrible*

*contours of age, doors closing
on a whispered kiss. Children*

*stray like visitors upon your fingers.
You touch their faces as you rise.*

*The station empties, your white
knuckles in that despairing close*

*that holds you in its mercy. Soon
there will be distance. I*

*forget the words, sounds with no
future and no past.*

Hugh Ogden

ONE BAD WINTER MORNING

I rise with
thoughtless early-hour
determination
feeling
vaguely
subordinate to the situation
the floor is cold
the sky seems blue
I am filled with something
like the sound made by
trash can lids falling
on frozen sidewalks
Kids must be sledding already
down icy sunny hillsides or
snow-covered wrecks in the
back of the gas station
It doesn't matter
The cold stiff branches are
banging windows but
don't make any sound
I walk feeling different
textures underfoot but
no sensation in the rest
of my body There's a small
grey cloud at the back
of my neck but
can't feel it anyway
The air is hanging in shreds
There's a day out there and
you're so far away I can
hardly breathe.

Megan O'Neill

Primitive man had his
creation reflected
in water,
which always moves,
and will not shatter.

We float our faces
back to us
from fixed and rigid
glass.

An ancient hunter
swallows the surface
of his reflection and moves on,
hungry, in high grass.

My fingers return,
unsatisfied, from the windowstream.

And in the mild Africa of my dreams,
a thirst-crazed man
steals to the black depths of my skull

Where, with hyenas barking and night-fear
trembling his knees,
he drinks undenied.

Pierce Gardner

MEMORY

this old indian,

he flows outside of my veins,
a fast runner hunched and alone
trying to get in,
but the flesh is too
thick.

he rages along my nerves.
he howls in the caverns of my face.
he waits on the edges of my lips
screaming.

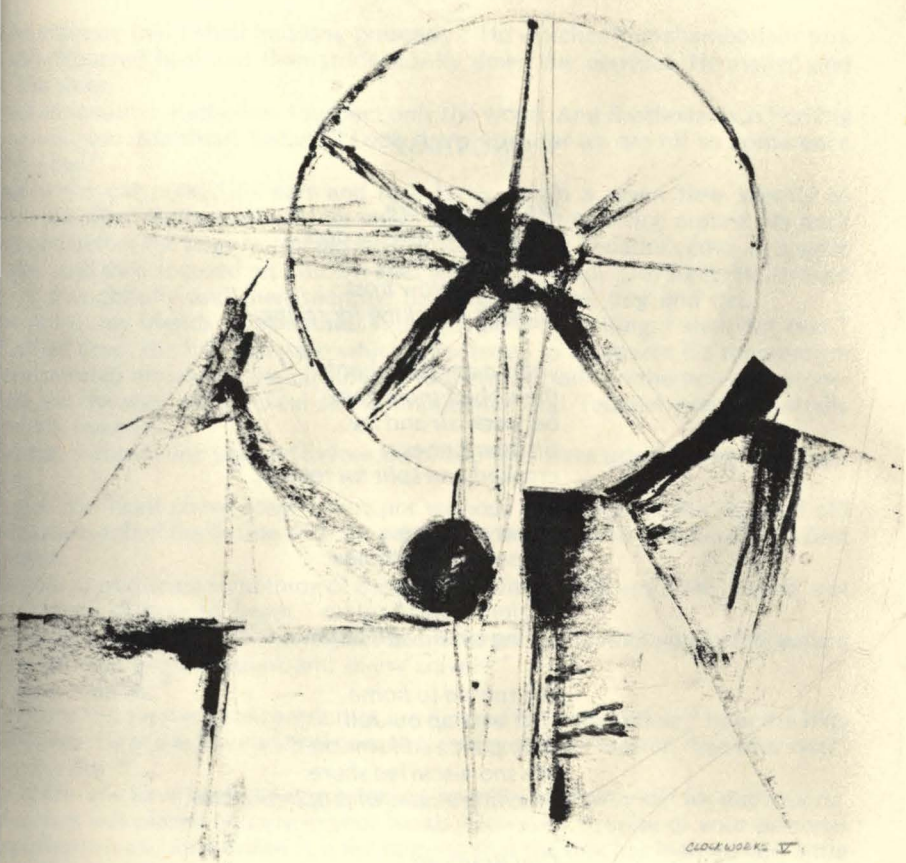
he sleeps in the hollow of my eye.
his face is the sculpture of my bones.

this old indian, a runner
chasing thin rabbits through me.
he eats the food that is the clot
of my thinking.

this old runner, an ancient passage,
running through me,
marching on stiff tundra,
a phantom of dark light,
an echo of shrill memory,

he waits in ambush on the cold slopes
of my face.

Carlos Martinez



SPRING THAW

We stood where
the pond seemed a door
and secret latch
to those below frost:
midgets knocking for spring.

Their puny fists shook
the ribbed snow-gate
between air and ice
till hoar-bones
cracked and split for respite.

It was not time.
Those yipping things
would like a fist
unclench and haul up
spring curled still below.

We turned to home.
Half-way up our hill
their palms still smacked
the snow-scuffed shore:
mocking augurs of prophetic thaw.

Gigi Bradford

"Tedium, my dear Katherine," he said, "is, under any circumstances, avoidable." Batfasio was addressing his favorite pet, a rheumy-eyed grey mongrel. He patted the soft muzzle gently as he set her breakfast down before her on the stone floor.

"That is why it is always helpful for me to—" and he stopped short, for there was a loud knock on the door. He straightened his robe, glanced absently out the window at the mountains in the distance, and drew back the bolt. One of the court chamberlains stood outside, wearing the nervously supercilious smile of a messenger. "His royal highness wishes to see you as soon as you have dressed and dined," he said.

"Tell his majesty that I shall be along presently." He watched the chamberlain turn on a satin-slipped heel and then stride noisily down the corridor. He smiled and closed the door.

"A royal assignation, Katherine. I suspect only the worst. And Rasthodel was coming along so well, too. Matthias! Tedariel! Look sharp now, for we are off to conference with the king."

A large white cat perked its ears and rose lazily, while a raven flew silently to Batfasio's shoulder. Batfasio placed his chain and pendant of office around his neck and stopped before the large mirror beside the door. He met Tedariel's cool, dark gaze in the glass and then focused on his own eyes with their steady grey light. He stroked his beard thoughtfully and then snapped his fingers to the dog and cat.

"Come along, my friends. His highness must not be kept waiting. I shall eat later." He shuffled down the hall at a pace which threatened to aggravate his rheumatism and concentrated mostly on the clicking of Katherine's nails on the polished stone. Matthias led the way with typical feline impudence and Tedariel noncommittally preened his feathers.

The audience room soon yawned before them and they were ushered into the king's presence.

Poldephyr the Third glared sternly, but not without reverence, at the stooped old man who approached the throne with his peculiar bowed manner and his three silent companions.

"Batfasio, I must discuss something of the greatest import with you." He paused, not entirely certain of how to begin.

"You must know, Batfasio, of the respect and deference accorded you in this palace by virtue of your great wisdom and many travels."

"Yes, your Majesty."

"Your needs and even your eccentricities are catered to in the fullest," here the king glanced pointedly at the three animals accompanying the old master, "are they not?"

"Certainly, Sire."

"Now, then—you have been the sole tutor of Crown Prince Rasthodel for many years. His education was placed entirely in your hands. However, in spite of *your* personal accomplishments and knowledge, it is my opinion that the boy has learned very little under your guided instruction. Indeed, in the past year or so he has begun to prate like an idiot. He discourses at length on the beauty of words in themselves and spends whole afternoons in the garden with his lute, singing ridiculous songs. A background in the arts is desirable for one of royal blood, but the boy has gained no practical knowledge of the world at all! He composed a poem yesterday which stank of absurdity—it spoke of 'the colours of thought that walk on four legs or do fly' and other such nonsense. I can respond to this in no other way than to tell you that unless a radical change is effected in the boy soon, a new teacher shall be found to replace you."

"I understand, your Highness," said Batfasio slowly and calmly. He turned and strode out of the room, his head hunched down in the usual way. At the door, the cat suddenly dashed ahead wildly and the raven squawked and flew off. Katherine's grey paws remained walking beside her master.

"Rasthodel, my boy, it is your father's desire that you grasp some practical knowledge of the world and its ways, so today's lesson will be rather different from what you are accustomed to. Today I shall lecture on the slightly obscure but important Theory of the Brick. You needn't make notations, this will be short." Batfasio's voice sounded very much older and sad to the boy that afternoon, and he squirmed nervously in his plush seat in the music room.

Batfasio lightly touched a key on the clavinet and strolled over to the window. "Suspended in the air above each one of us—every living soul, my boy—is a very large brick of immense poundage. Now, the less faith a person has in his brick, the farther up in the air it rises from him until one day he has no faith in it at all and it completely vanishes from his sight. That is also precisely when the brick falls back. And from such a height, you can well imagine the fateful impact."

"And if he believes?" cried the astonished prince.

"Sort of the opposite. The faithful must carry the brick upon his head."

"Oh, master!" sobbed the loyal student, "where can mine be now?"

"No one has the power to perceive the location of another person's brick. Only you can know. End of lecture. Come Matthias, Katherine, Tedariel!"

The white cat leapt off the clavinet, the grey dog rose from the corner and the coal-black bird spread its wings, all looking at their friend, who was heading for the door.

Rasthodel's mouth hung slightly open and his lips were trembling. He thought that if he gazed toward the heavens without tilting back his brow, his eyes might become blind pearls so that he wouldn't have to look at the melancholy old man shuffling out of the room with his typical, oddly stooped gait—as if he were supporting some incredible weight on his head.

Philip Demke

INTERMISSION

*Light reflects on
smooth polished curves
of brown bodies.
Violins, cellos, lie,
discarded for the moment,
on the folds of chairs
pushed carelessly aside.
Walls remember, echo with
past sounds,
recall each instant
caressed from velvet instruments.*

*He leaves the room.
Sunlight floats in
over the warmed, tangled sheets,
where she sleeps,
silent now.
The day, in quiet clarity,
sings with their noise.*

Virginia Butera

EDITORS, ETCETERA:

Joel Kemelhor
Chase Twichell

Gigi Bradford
Virginia Butera
Michael Gross
Steve Pember
Durward Watson

Stephen Minot, advisor

